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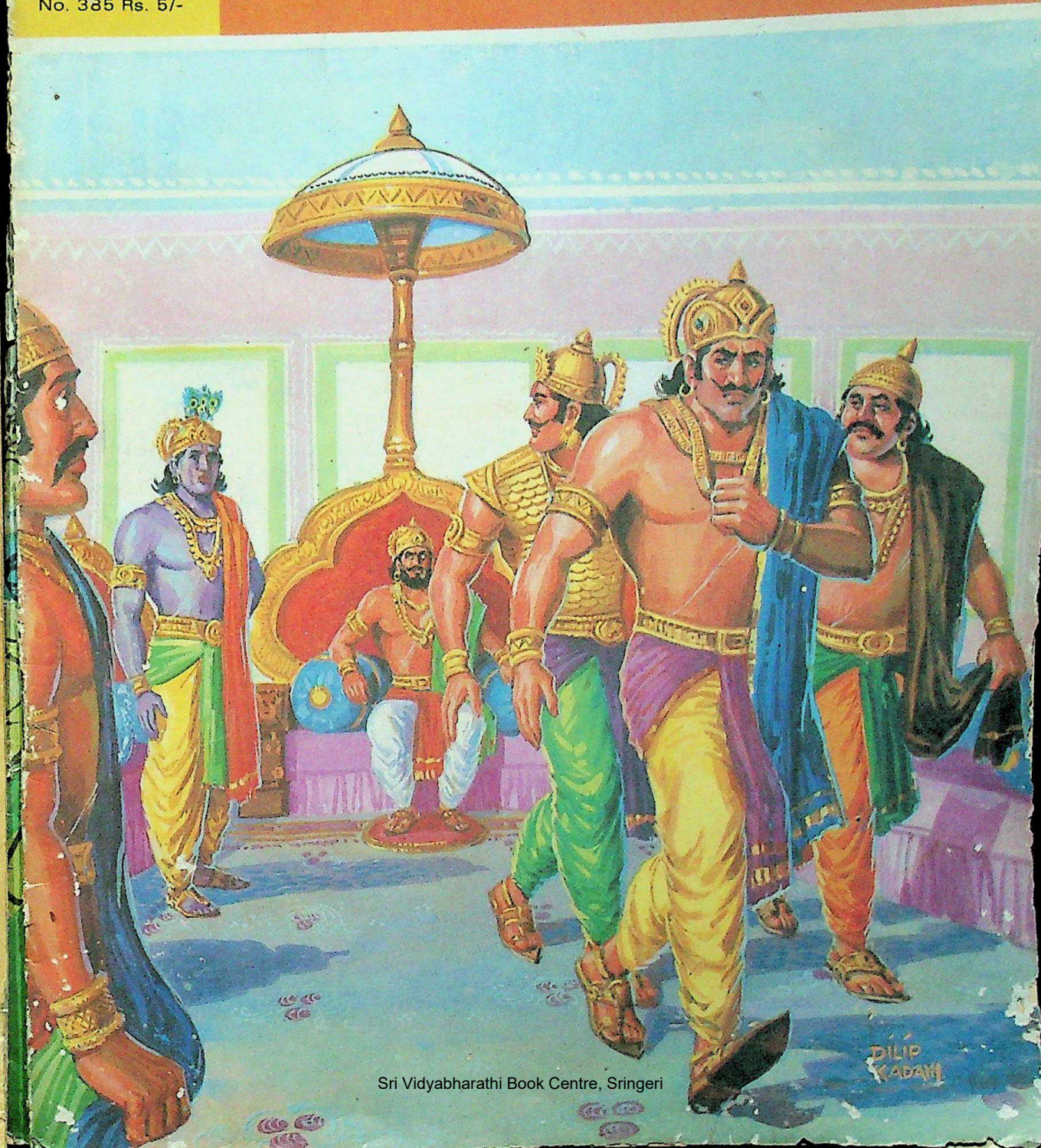
Mahabharata-29

KRISHNA'S PEACE MISSION



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No. 385 July 15, 1987

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MAHABHARATA

Veda Vyasa's Epic on the Bharata race was first recited in public by his disciple Vaishampayana at the behest of the ageless seer Vyasa himself.

The recital took place in the august presence of King Janamejaya—great grandson of Vyasa—and the many learned sages who had assembled for Janamejaya's Sarpa Satra (a 12-year-long snake sacrifice).

The twenty-eigth session of our rendering of the Mahabharata narrated how Sanjaya conveyed the message of the Pandavas, requesting the restoration of their kingdom, to the Kaurava assembly. A debate ensued among the Kauravas and Duryondana declared that he would not return the kingdom to the Pandavas at any cost. The session ended with Krishna taking up the task of negotiation for a peaceful settlement between the Kauravas and the Pandavas.

*

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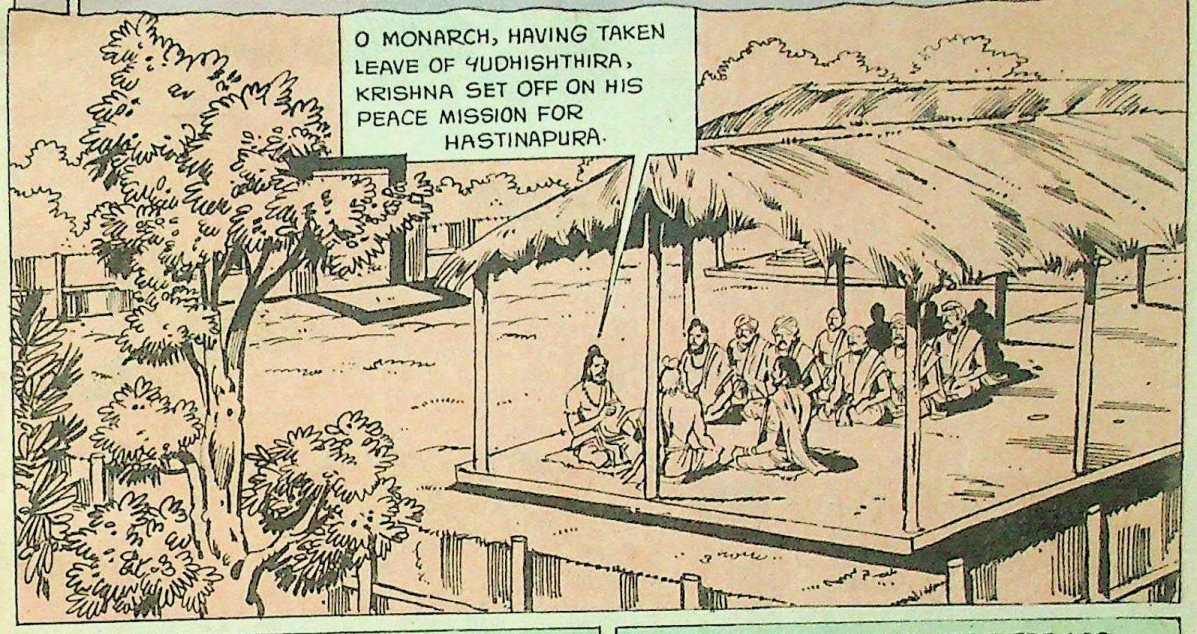

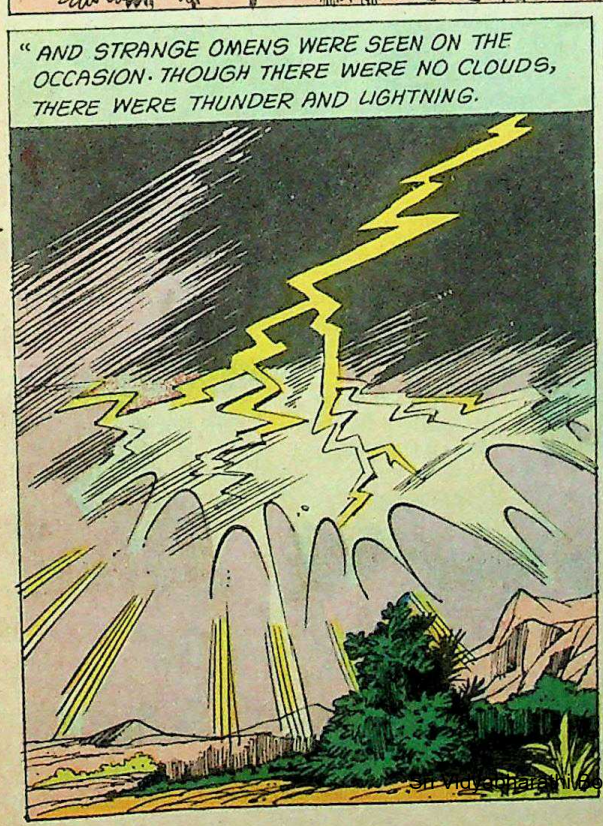

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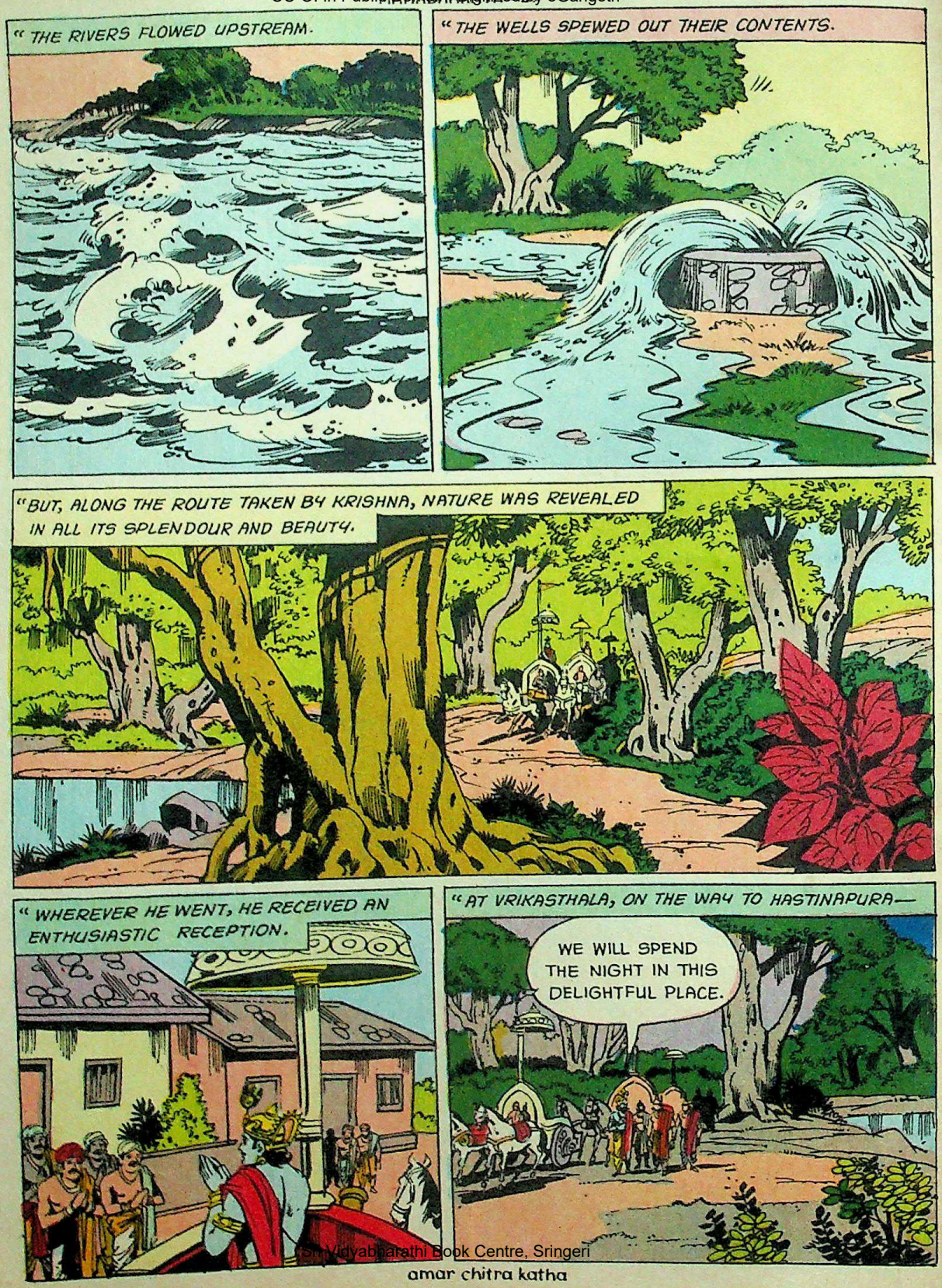

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"MEANWHILE, AT HASTINAPURA, A SPY PRESENTED HIMSELF BEFORE KING DHRITARASHTRA.

O GREAT KING, KRISHNA IS ON HIS WAY HERE.

"DHRITARASHTRA IMMEDIATELY CALLED VIDURA.

O VIDURA, WE MUST SPARE NO EFFORT IN GIVING A BIG WELCOME TO KRISHNA. HE IS THE FOREMOST AMONG MEN AND WORTHY OF WORSHIP.

HAVE A GRAND MANSION BUILT ON HIS WAY HERE. I WILL HONOUR HIM WITH SIXTEEN GOLDEN CHARIOTS, EIGHT ELEPHANTS AND MANY OTHER PRECIOUS GIFTS. I WILL PERSONALLY GO WITH ALL MY SONS AND GRANDSONS TO WELCOME HIM. DURYODHANA WILL NOT COME WITH ME.

"HEARING THIS, VIDURA SAID —

O KING, NO DOUBT KRISHNA DESERVES ALL THIS. INDEED HE DESERVES THE WHOLE EARTH. BUT I KNOW YOUR MIND. YOU DO NOT REALLY WISH TO HONOUR HIM. THE TRUTH IS THAT YOU THINK YOU COULD BRIBE KRISHNA WITH YOUR GIFTS AND DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN HIM AND THE PANDAVAS.

THAT, O KING, WILL NEVER BE POSSIBLE. KRISHNA WILL NEVER ACCEPT ANY OF YOUR GIFTS. IF YOU REALLY WISH TO MAKE HIM HAPPY, AGREE TO WHAT HE IS COMING HERE FOR — A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT BETWEEN YOUR SONS AND THE PANDAVAS.

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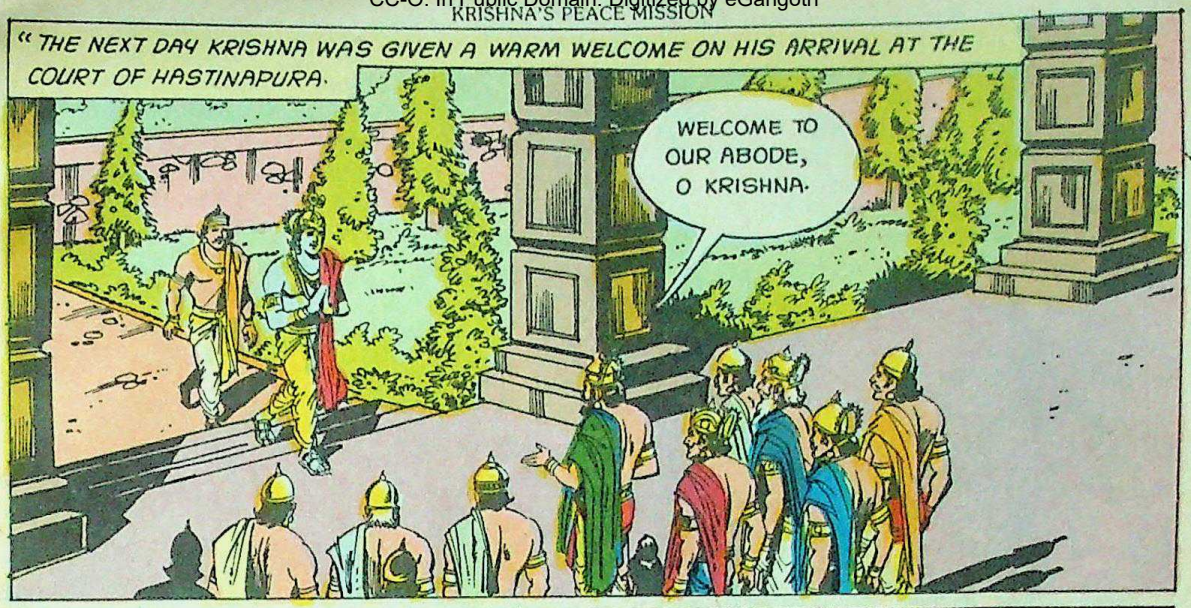

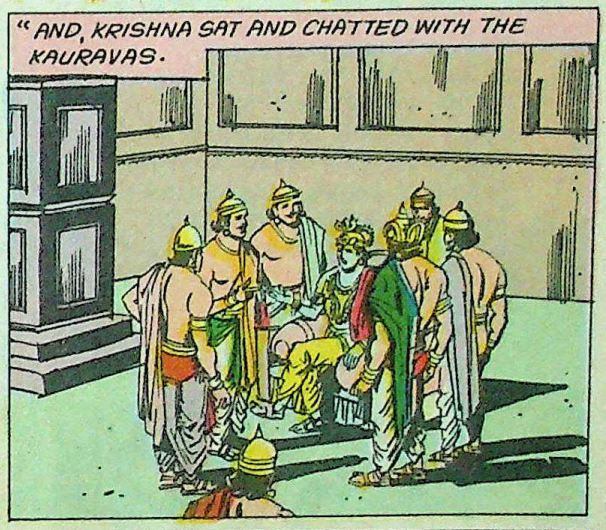

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"HER VOICE CHOKED WITH GRIEF, KUNTI SAID TO KRISHNA—

HOW ARE MY SONS? THEY WERE USED TO A LIFE OF COMFORT IN PALATIAL MANSIONS. HOW ARE THEY FARING IN THE FORESTS INFESTED WITH SAVAGE BEASTS?

HOW IS MY VIRTUOUS YUDHISHTHIRA AND HOW IS MY POWERFUL BHEEMA WHO IS EASILY AROUSED TO ANGER? HOW IS MY ARJUNA, THAT DEARLY LOVED COUSIN AND FRIEND OF YOURS? ARE THE TWINS IN GOOD HEALTH? AND MY DEAREST DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, THE BEAUTIFUL PANCHALI, IS SHE WELL?

HOW SHE HAS SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE VILE KAURAVAS! O KRISHNA, NEVER IN MY LIFE HAVE I FELT AS GRIEVED AS WHEN I SAW DRAUPADI BEING DRAGGED INTO THE KAURAVA ASSEMBLY AND DISGRACED IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY.

WIDOWHOOD, POVERTY, DEPENDENCE ON CHARITY AND PROLONGED SEPARATION FROM MY SONS HAVE CAUSED ME GREAT SUFFERING.

I WAS DISTRESSED AT MY NOBLE SONS BEING DRIVEN INTO THE FOREST. AND NOW THEY HAVE EVEN BEEN DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIVELIHOOD. WE DESERVE HAPPINESS, O KRISHNA, AFTER LONG YEARS OF AGONY.

O KRISHNA, TELL MY SONS THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR THEM TO SHOW THEMSELVES AS TRUE KSHATRIYAS. TELL THEM THAT IF THEY DO NOT UPHOLD THEIR DHARMA NOW, I SHALL FORSAKE THEM FOR EVER.

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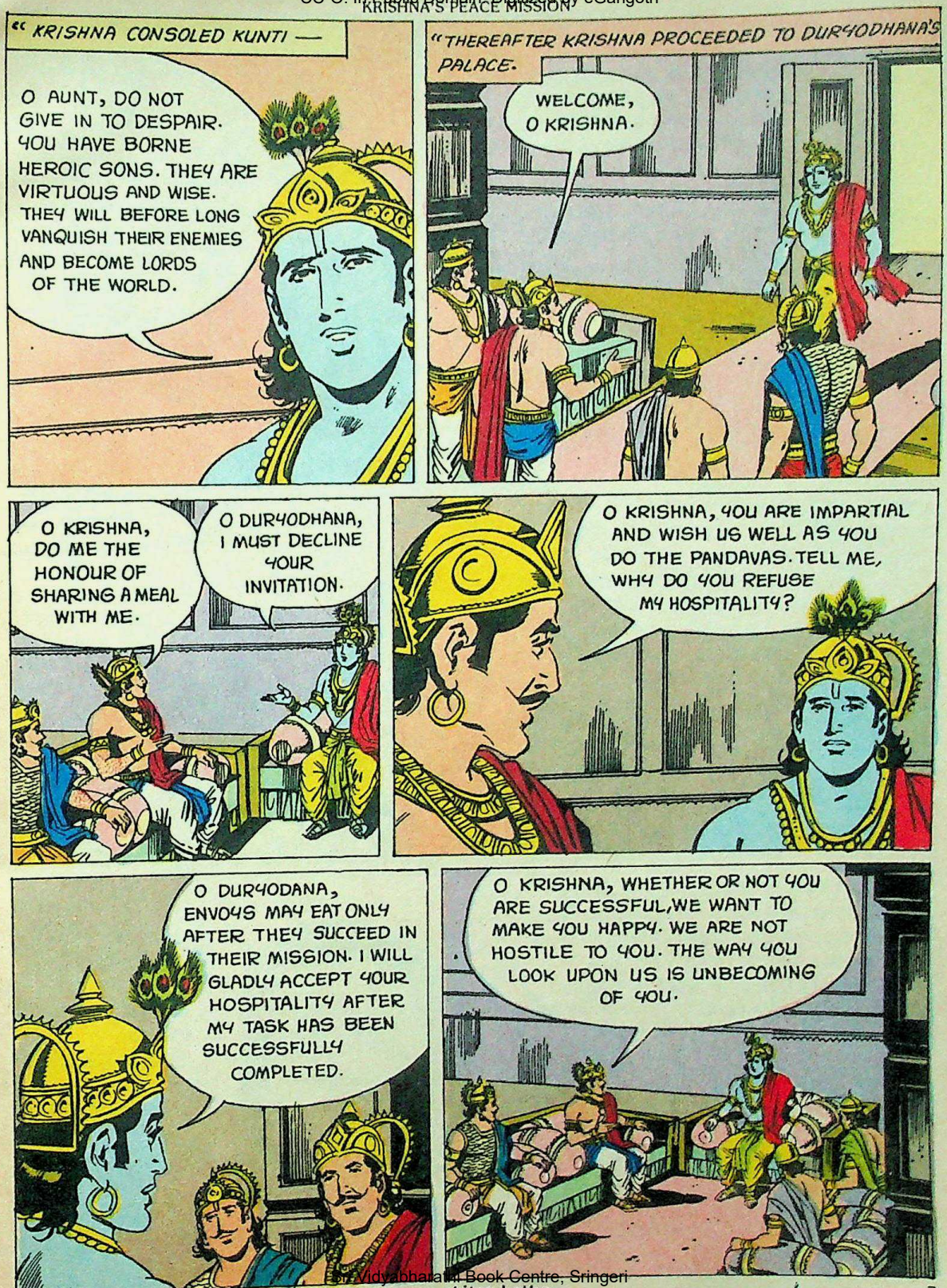

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"KRISHNA ROSE—

O DURYODHANA, ONE ACCEPTS AN INVITATION TO A MEAL EITHER OUT OF FRIENDSHIP AND GOODWILL OR OUT OF DIRE NEED. YOU HAVE NEVER BY ANY ACT OF YOURS INSPIRED FRIENDSHIP IN ME. NOR AM I IN EXTREME NEED. YOUR FOOD IS DEFILED BY YOUR WICKEDNESS.

"SO SAYING, HE WENT TO VIDURA'S PLACE AND TOOK HIS FOOD THERE.

LATER—

I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU HAVE DONE THE RIGHT THING IN COMING HERE. DURYODHANA AND HIS FRIENDS ARE EVIL. HE WILL DISREGARD YOUR COUNSEL. DO NOT GO IN THEIR MIDST, O KRISHNA.

I KNOW THAT, VIDURA. I WILL STRIVE WITH IMPARTIALITY FOR THE WELFARE OF BOTH SIDES. EVEN IF DURYODHANA MISTRUSTS ME, I WILL HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF HAVING DONE MY DUTY.

I DO NOT WISH TO BE ACCUSED OF NOT HAVING ATTEMPTED TO STOP A POSSIBLE WAR.

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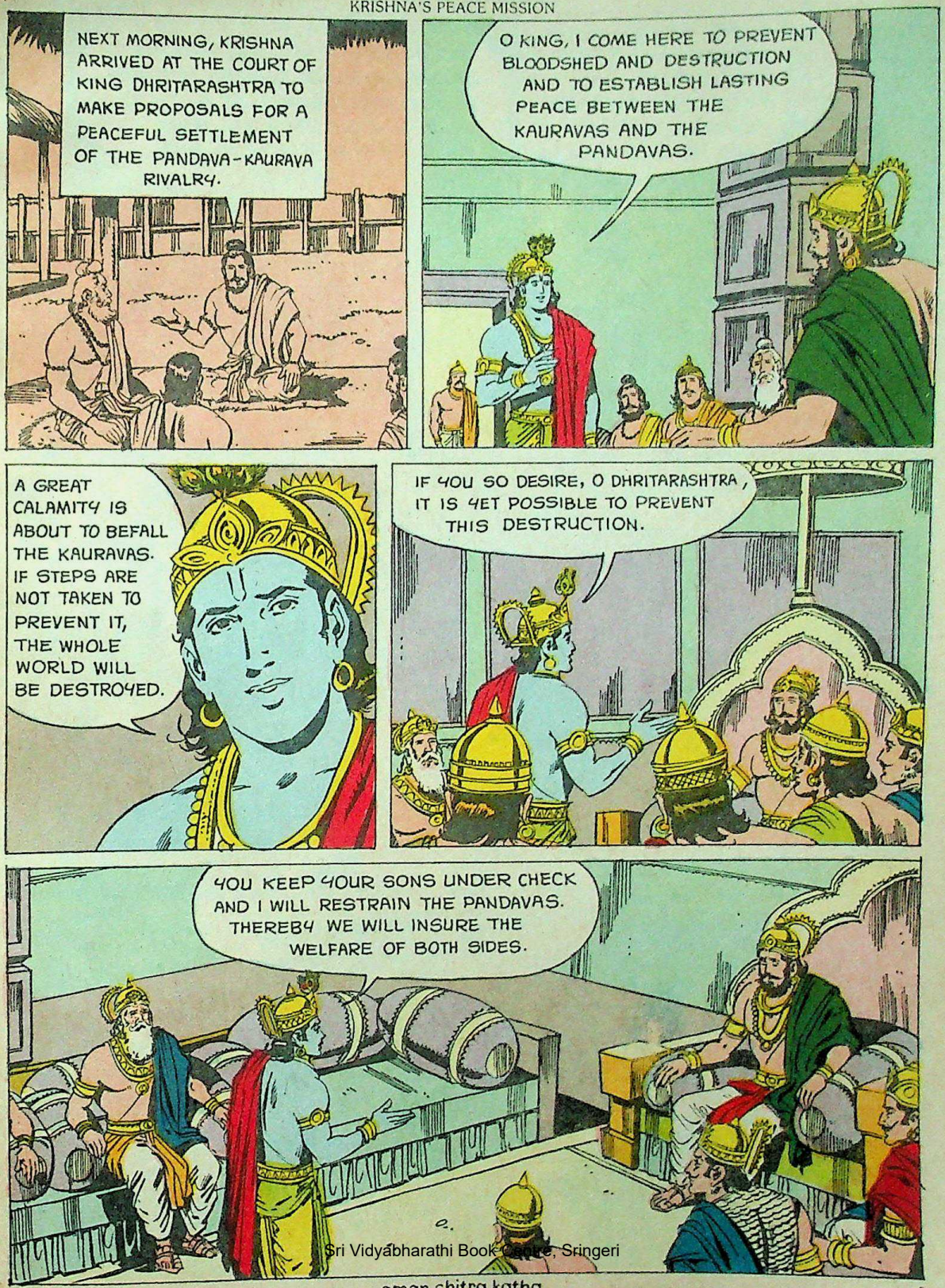

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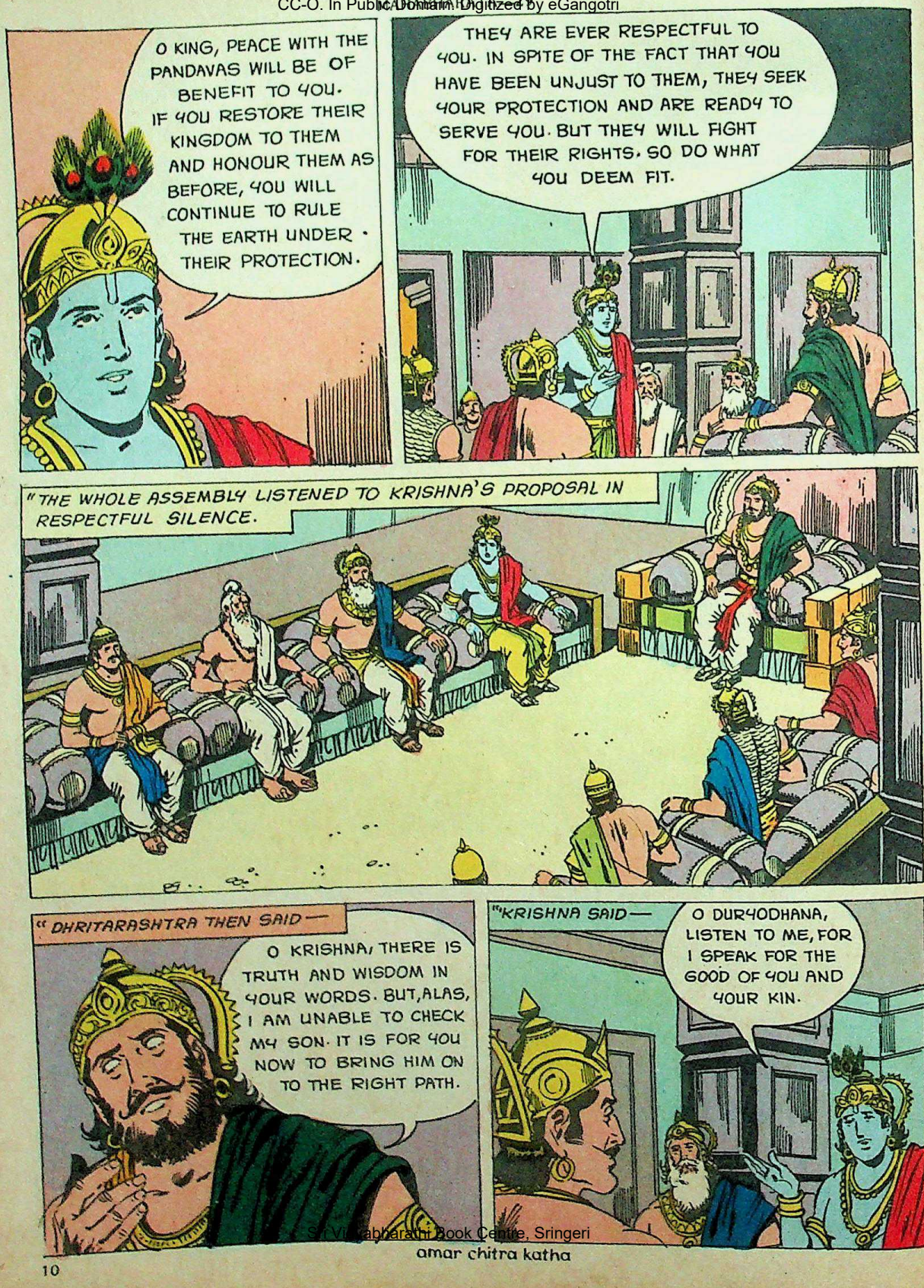

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"GANDHARI WAS BROUGHT TO THE COURT—

O GANDHARI, YOUR WICKED SON IS BENT UPON BRINGING ABOUT TOTAL DESTRUCTION. DISREGARDING THE ADVICE OF ELDERS, HE HAS INSULTED ALL OF US BY STALKING OUT WITHOUT A WORD.

"GANDHARI REPLIED—

O KING, YOU INDULGED YOUR SON TOO MUCH AND ARE HENCE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESENT SITUATION.

ON DHRITARASHTRA'S INSTRUCTION VIDURA SUMMONED DURYODHANA BACK INTO COURT.

WHEN DURYODHANA ARRIVED—

O DURYODHANA, LISTEN TO ME FOR I SPEAK FOR YOUR WELFARE.

IT IS NOT TRUE THAT KRIPA, BHEESHMA AND DRONA WILL EMPLOY THEIR FULL MIGHT AGAINST THE PANDAVAS, BECAUSE THEY LOVE THE PANDAVAS AS MUCH AS THEY LOVE YOU. THEY MAY FIGHT ON YOUR SIDE AND DIE ON THE BATTLEFIELD BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN YOUR DEPENDANTS. BUT THEY WILL NEVER DESPISE YUDHISHTHIRA.

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"DURYODHANA ONCE AGAIN STORMED OUT OF THE COURT.

"THEN HE GOT TOGETHER WITH SHAKUNI, KARNA AND DUHSHASANA...

"...AND HATCHED A CONSPIRACY.

BEFORE KRISHNA, BHEESHMA AND DHRITARASHTRA HAVE US ARRESTED, WE MUST TAKE KRISHNA CAPTIVE. IT WILL DEMORALISE AND PARALYSE THE PANDAVAS.

"THE ASTUTE SATYAKI FORESAW THE SCHEME. HE CALLED KRITAVARMAN AND SAID—

GET OUR TROOPS READY FOR BATTLE. MEANWHILE I SHALL INFORM KRISHNA OF THE CONSPIRACY.

"SATYAKI THEN ENTERED THE KAURAVA COURT AND ANNOUNCED—

I HAVE JUST COME TO KNOW THAT DURYODHANA, SHAKUNI, KARNA AND DUHSHASANA ARE PLANNING TO TAKE THE UNCONQUERABLE KRISHNA CAPTIVE.

O KING, YOUR SON BELIEVES HE CAN TAKE ME PRISONER. I CAN TAKE ALL KAURAVAS PRISONER SINGLE-HANDED. BUT REST ASSURED, I SHALL NOT DO ANYTHING DISHONOURABLE.

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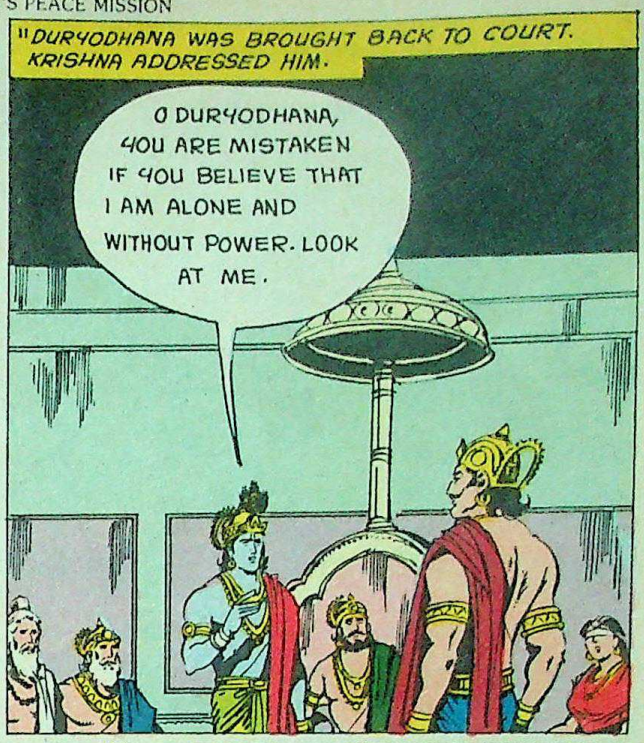

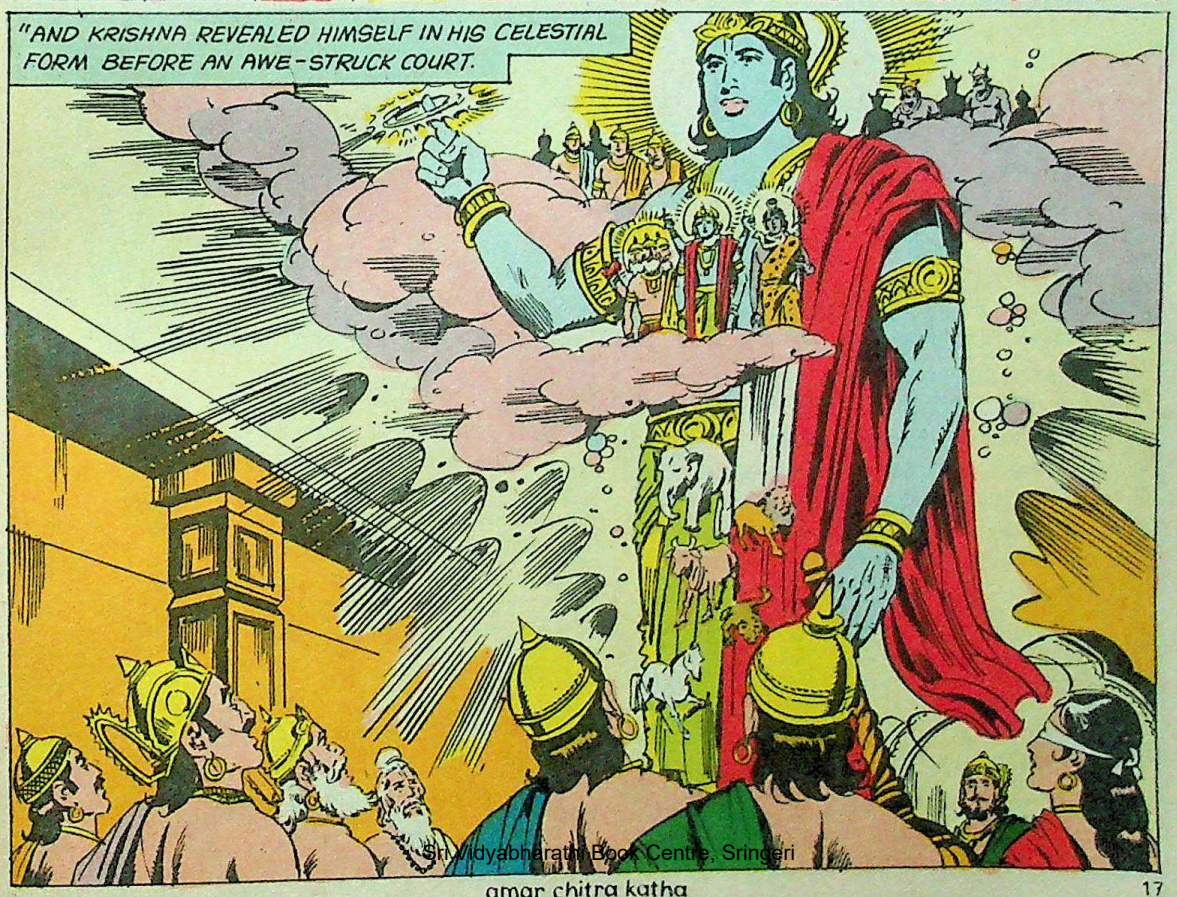

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"SEEING THE DIVINE FORM, THE GODS SHOWERED FLOWERS FROM ABOVE.

"THE WHOLE EARTH TREMBLED AND THE OCEANS BECAME AGITATED.

"THEN ASSUMING HIS NORMAL FORM, KRISHA ROSE AND WALKED OUT OF THE COURT.

"AT THE GATE, DHRITARASHTRA ADDRESSED KRISHNA —

O KRISHNA, YOU HAVE SEEN THE POWER I WIELD OVER MY SONS. YOU HAVE SEEN WITH YOUR OWN EYES HOW I HAVE MADE EVERY EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT PEACE.

"KRISHNA REPLIED —

ALL OF YOU HAVE SEEN DURYODHANA'S IMPROPER BEHAVIOUR. NOW EVEN DHRITARASHTRA PLEADS HIS INABILITY TO RESTRAIN HIS SON. WITH YOUR PERMISSION I WILL NOW GO BACK TO YUDHISHTHIRA.

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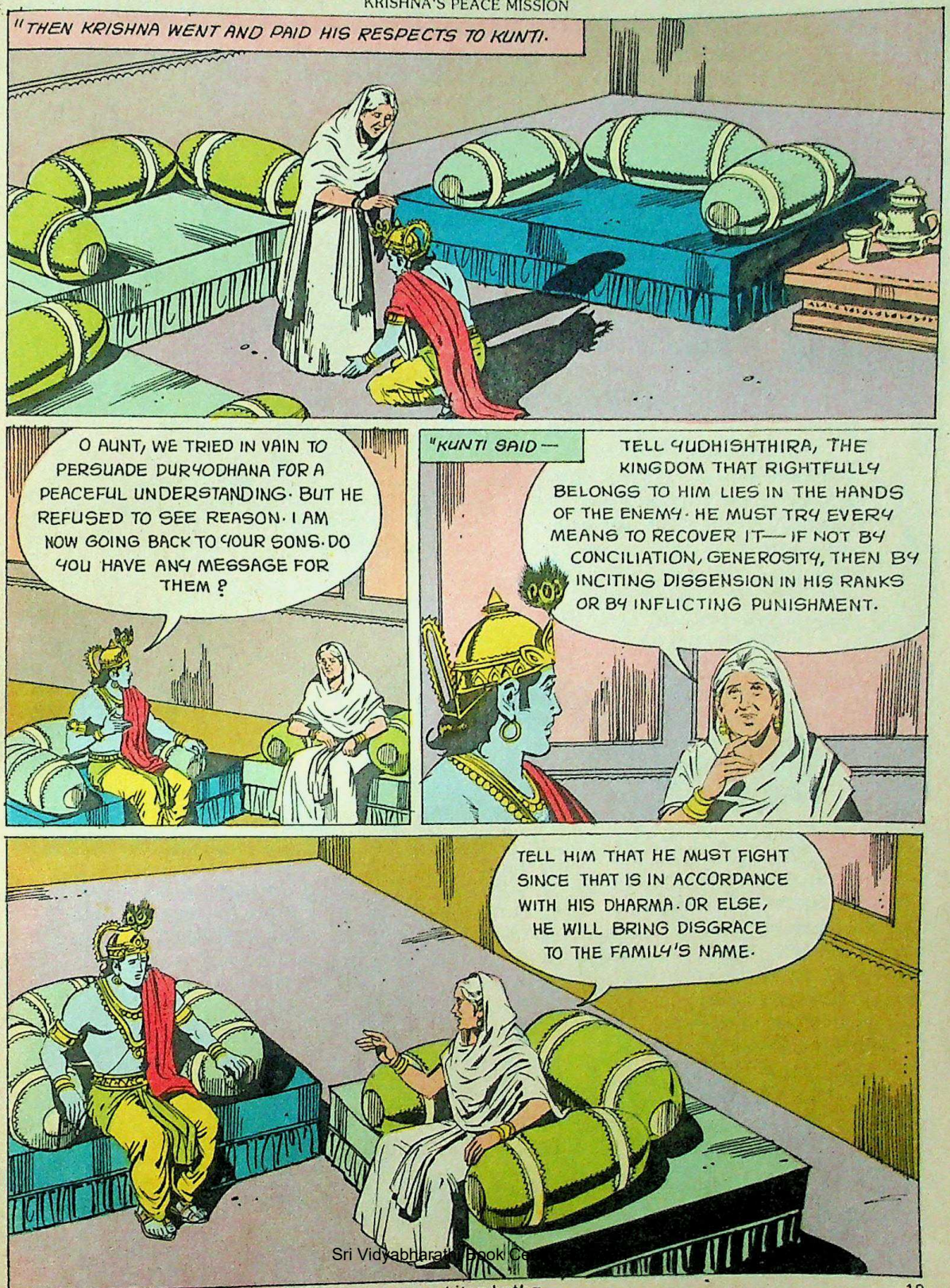

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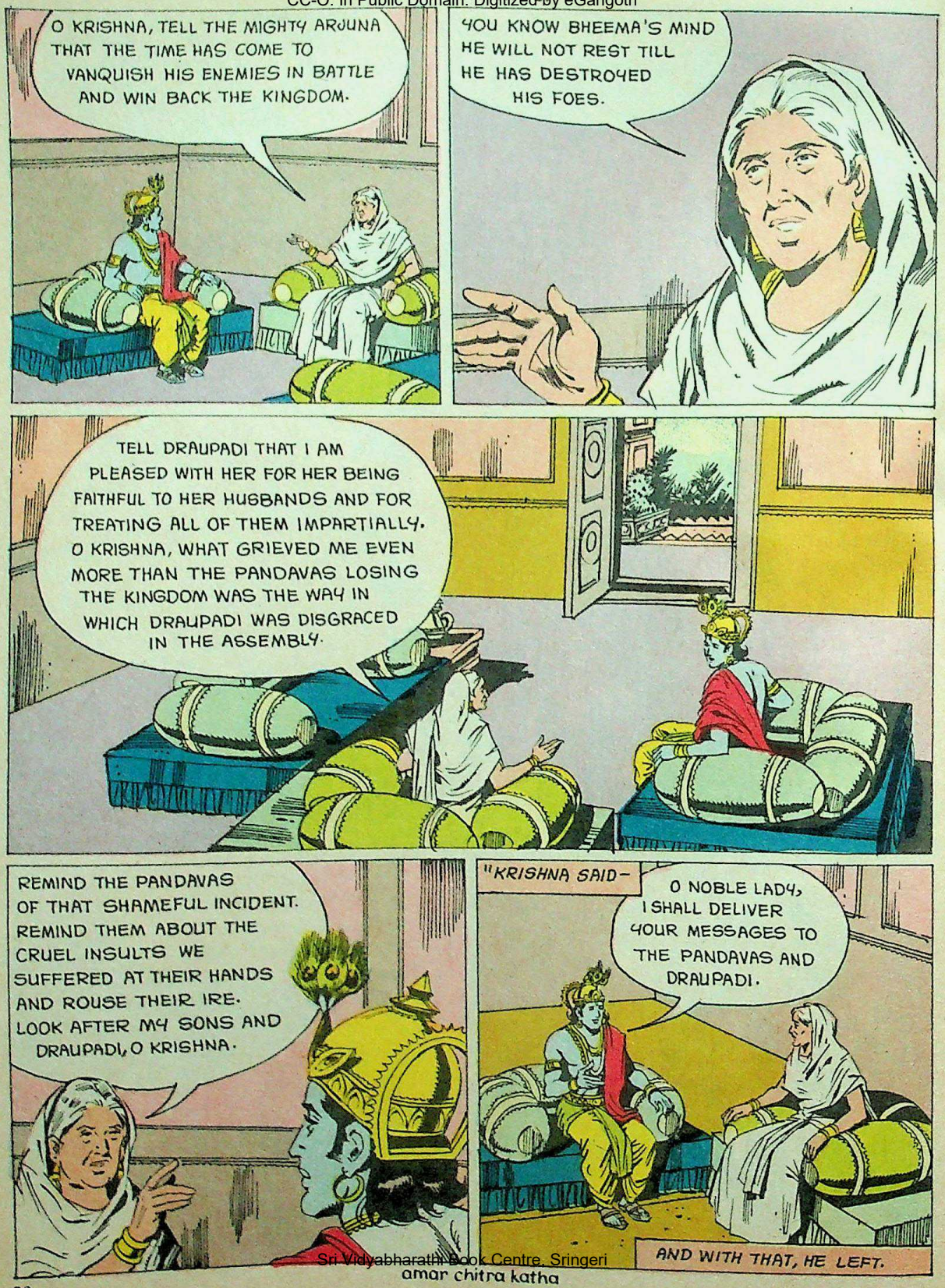

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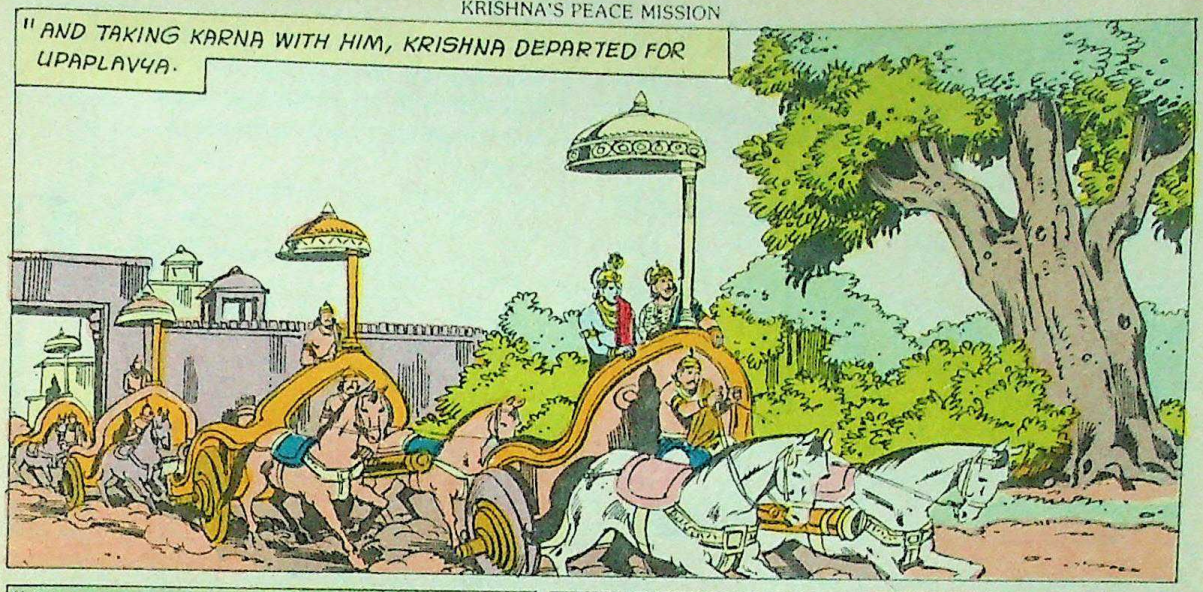

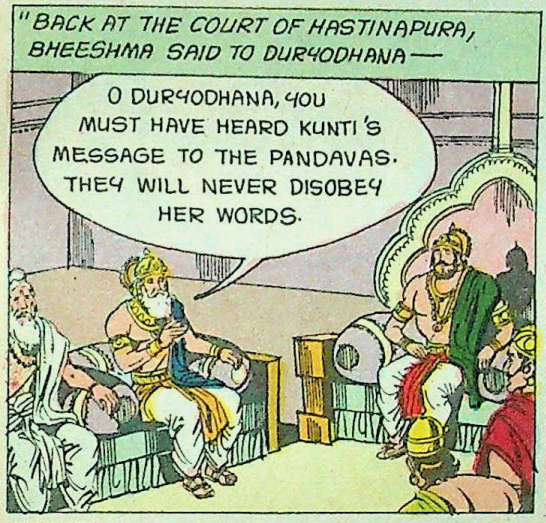

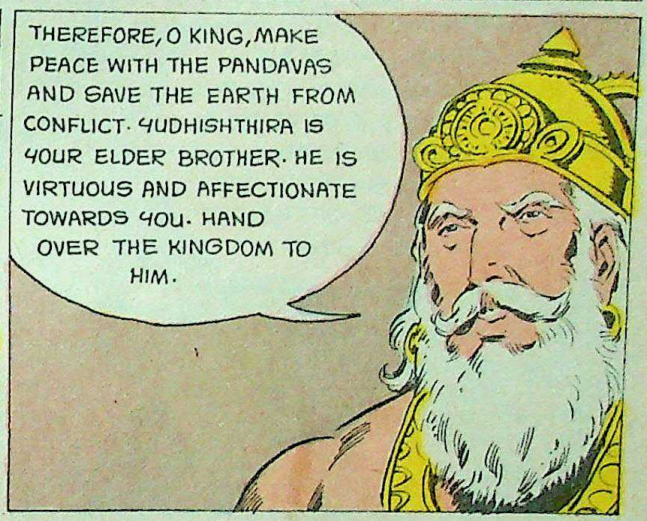

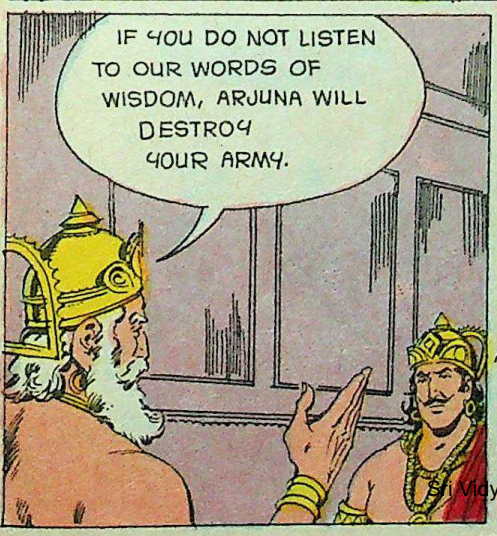

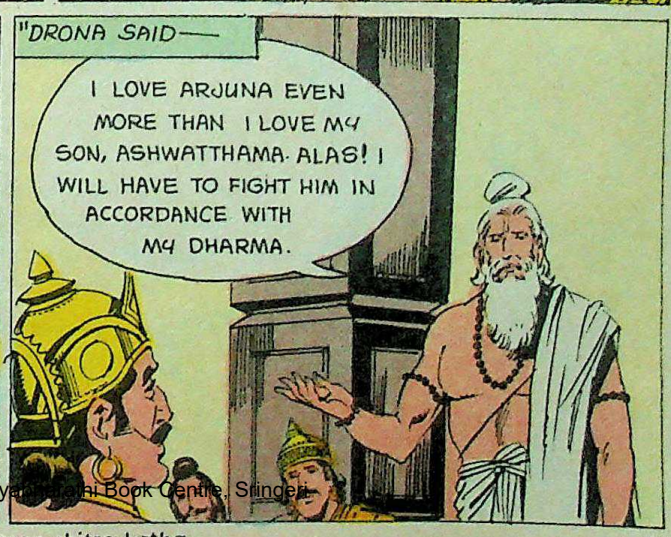

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I AGAIN ENTREAT YOU, O DURYODHANA, THERE IS NO NEED FOR WAR. MAKE PEACE WITH THOSE HEROES FOR THE PROSPERITY AND WELL-BEING OF THE WHOLE KURU RACE.

BUT THE ENTREATIES OF BHEESHMA AND DRONA FELL UPON DEAF EARS. DURYODHANA GLOWERED AT THEM AND REFUSED TO SAY A WORD IN REPLY.

"DHRITARASHTRA SAID TO SANJAYA —

O SANJAYA, I HEAR THAT KRISHNA TOOK KARNA WITH HIM IN HIS CHARIOT AND WENT OUT OF THE CITY. TELL ME, O SANJAYA, WHAT KRISHNA SPOKE TO KARNA AND WHAT THE LATTER SAID IN REPLY.

"SANJAYA SAID —

THEN LISTEN, O KING, WHILE I RECOUNT THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN KRISHNA AND KARNA.

O KARNA, YOU ARE THE SON OF KUNTI, BORN TO HER WHEN SHE WAS A MAIDEN. YOU ARE THUS THE ELDEST AMONG THE PANDAVAS. FORSAKE DURYODHANA AND JOIN YOUR BROTHERS, THE PANDAVAS.

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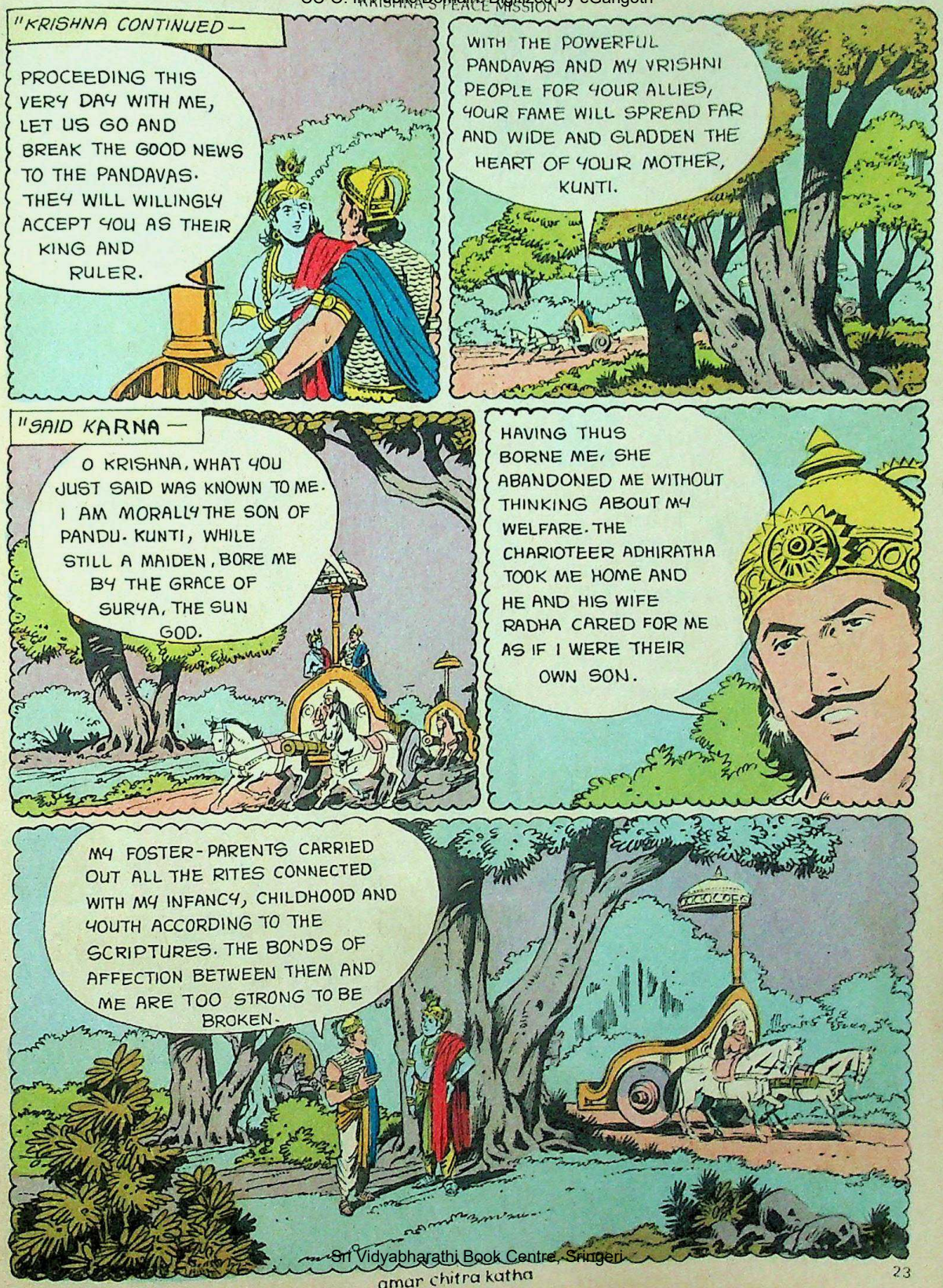

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BY THE GRACE OF DURYODHANA, I HAVE BEEN THE SOVEREIGN OF A KINGDOM FOR THE PAST MANY YEARS. HE CAME TO MY HELP IN MY HOUR OF NEED. RELYING UPON ME, HE HAS CHALLANGED THE PANDAVAS. HOW CAN I DESERT HIM NOW?

IN THE ENSUING BATTLE I HAVE CHOSEN ARJUNA AS MY SOLE COMBATANT. IF I BACK OUT NOW, IT WOULD BE DISHONOURABLE FOR BOTH OF US.

BUT, O KRISHNA, DO NOT TELL THE PANDAVAS THAT I AM THEIR ELDER BROTHER, FOR THEN, YUDHISHTHIRA WILL NEVER ACCEPT THE KINGDOM. HE WILL GIVE IT TO ME...

... AND I WILL TURN IT OVER TO DURYODHANA IN GRATITUDE.

THIS GREAT WAR TO BE FOUGHT AT THE SACRED SPOT OF KURUKSHETRA WILL BE THE CAUSE OF GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS WHICH WILL BE REPEATED AND RETOLD GENERATATION AFTER GENERATATION.

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MEANWHILE, BACK IN HASTINAPURA, VIDURA INFORMED KUNTI OF THE FAILURE OF KRISHNA'S MISSION AS A RESULT OF DURYODHANA'S OBSTINACY.

"KUNTI BEMOANED—

OF WHAT USE ARE WEALTH AND POWER GAINED THROUGH LARGE-SCALE DESTRUCTION? THE FACT THAT BHEESHMA, DRONA AND KARNA WILL JOIN THE RANKS OF THE KAURAVAS FILLS ME WITH GREATER FEAR.

BHEESHMA AND DRONA WILL NOT WILLINGLY SLAY THE PANDAVAS WHO ARE VERY DEAR TO THEM. BUT KARNA? HE IS MIGHTY AND WILL SURELY TRY TO KILL MY SONS. I WILL GO AND APPEAL TO HIM AS A MOTHER.

"SO KUNTI ARRIVED ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGA WHERE KARNA WAS WORSHIPPING SURYA, THE SUN GOD.

"HAVING FINISHED HIS PRAYERS, KARNA TURNED AND SAW KUNTI. HE BOWED TO HER AND SAID—

I AM KARNA, THE SON OF RADHA AND ADHIRATHA. TELL ME, O LADY, WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU.

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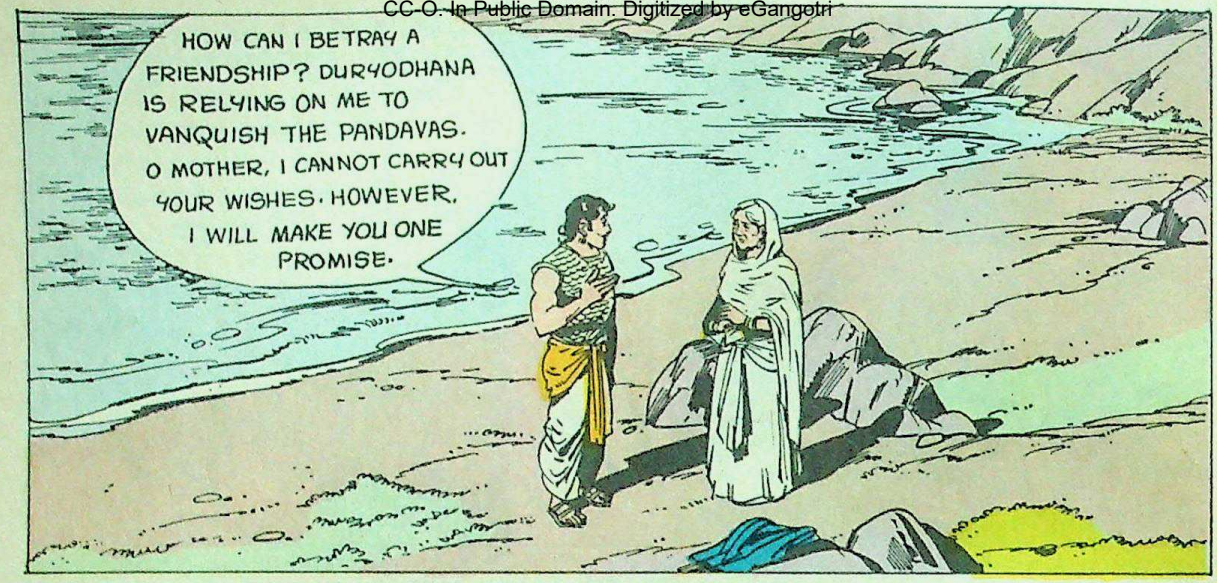

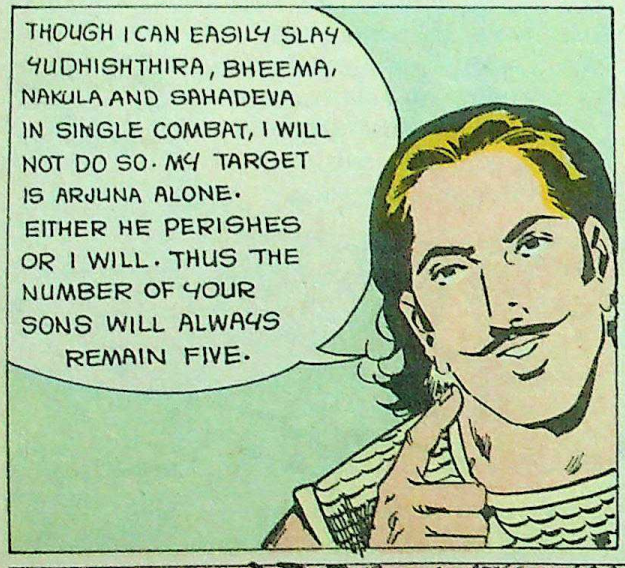

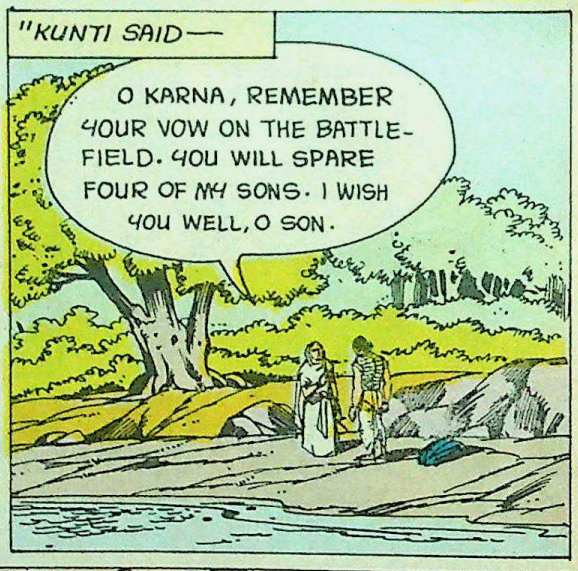

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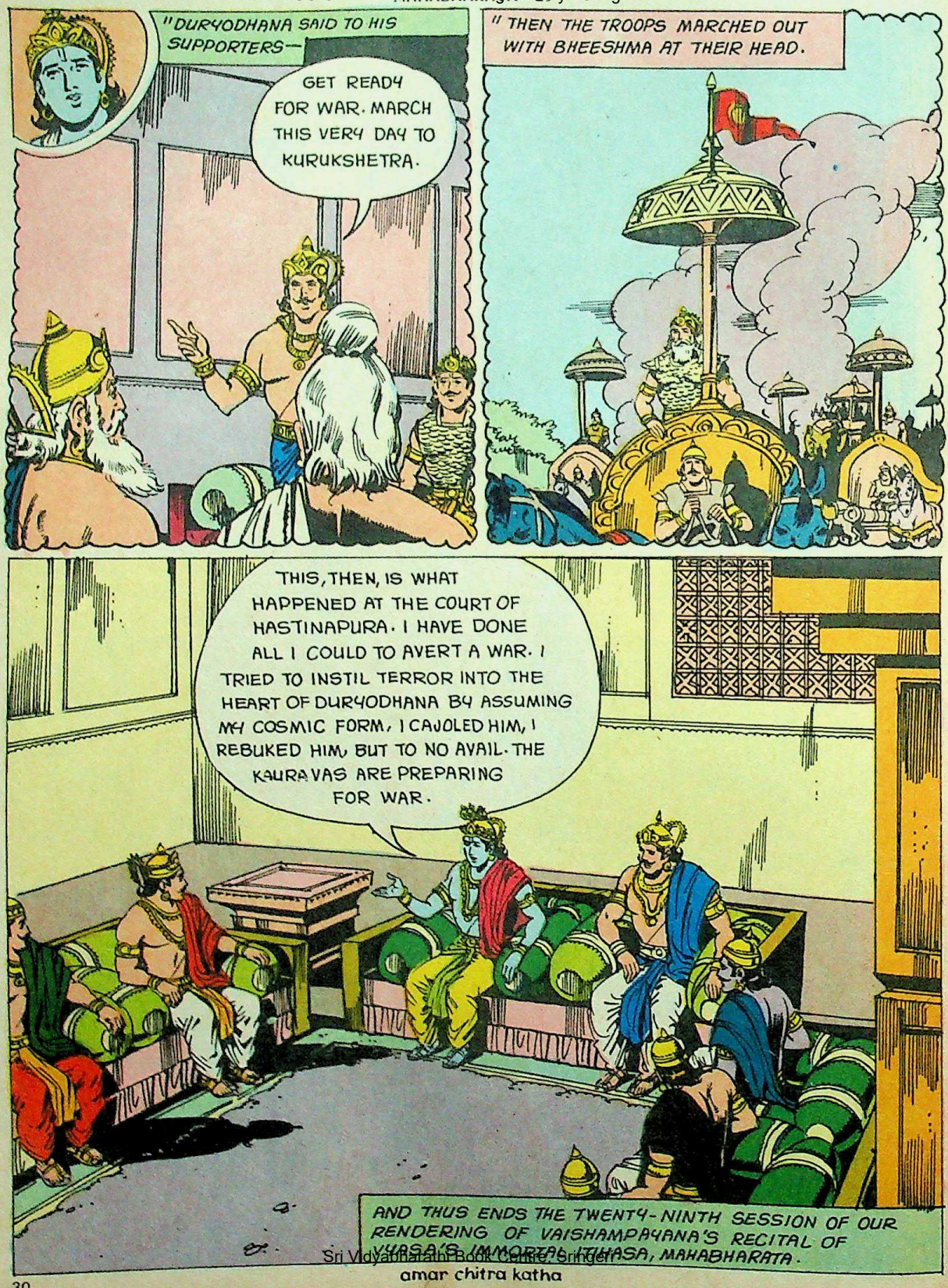

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MAGGI 2-Minute noodles

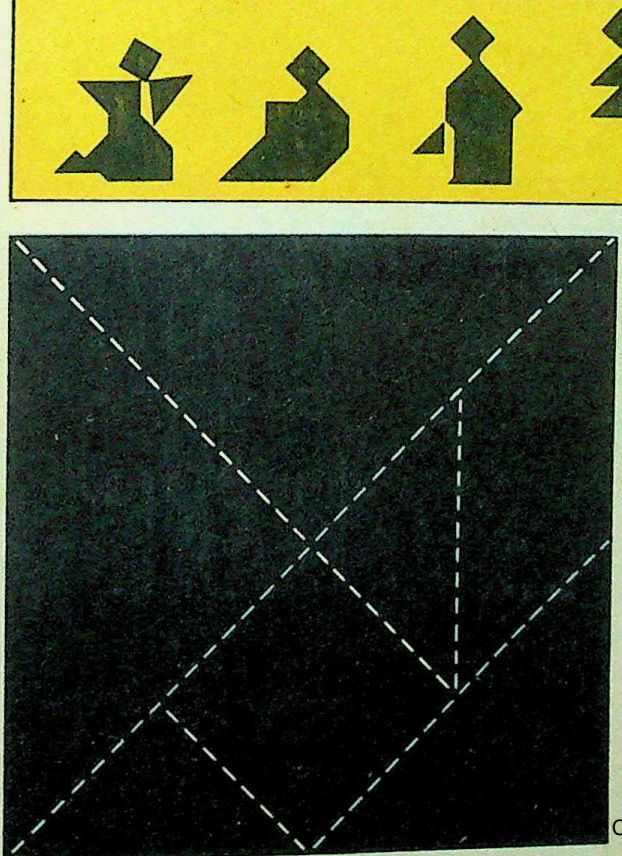
PUZZLES

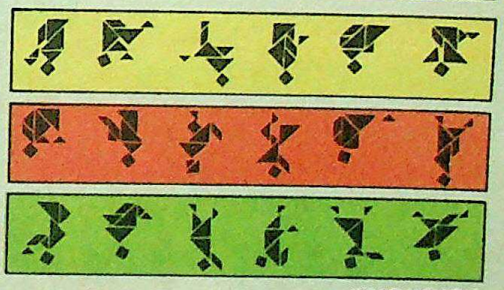
Shapes to fit, bit by bit

MAGGI 2-Minute noodles

This ancient Chinese puzzle
Has seven little bits,
Thousand shapes to make
How many can you fit?

Just cut along the dotted line. Paste the shapes on a thick sheet (it will last longer!) and get started! We've put down 18 exciting shapes for you to make! Use all the seven pieces everytime.





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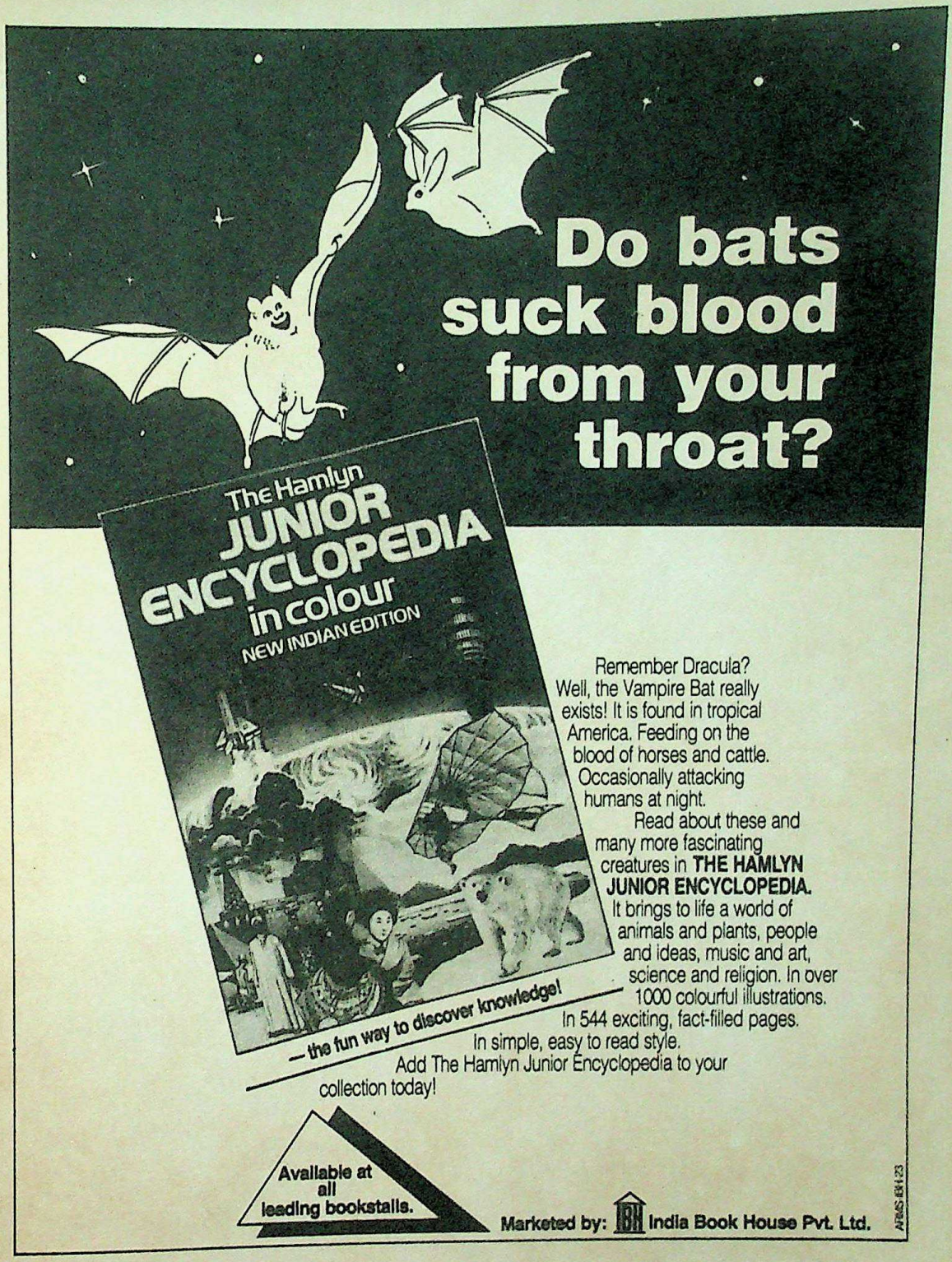
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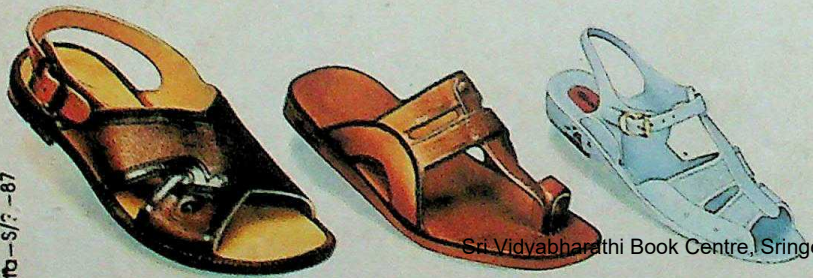

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